

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 03572 182330Z

73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

HEW-08 DRC-01 /151 W

----- 128530

R 182301Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5284

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 3572

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, HO

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH MINLAB FONSECA

DURING A CALL I MADE UPON HIM AT HIS OFFICE SEPTEMBER  
17, LABOR MINISTER GUATAMA FONSECA, AMONG OTHERS, MADE  
THE FOLLOWING TWO IMPORTANT POINTS:

1. THERE HAS NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE COUNCIL  
OF MINISTERS A SMALL WORKING GROUP WHICH MEETS REGULARLY  
TO HANDLE DAY TO DAY GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND CRISES.  
FORMED AT THE INITIATIVE OF LABOR MINISTER FONSECA AND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER BATRES, AND WITH THE APPROVAL  
OF CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ, THE GROUP INCLUDES: FONSECA;  
BATRES; MANUEL ACOSTA, FINANCE MINISTER; ABRAHAM BENNATON,  
MINISTER OF ECONOMY; AND COL JUAN MELGAR, MINISTER OF  
GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO FONSECA COL MELGAR SERVES AS  
PRESIDING OFFICER QUOTE SINCE HE HAS NO VESTED INTEREST AND  
NO CONSTITUENCY UNQUOTE. WHEN THE GROUP IS DEALING WITH THE  
AFFAIRS OF A MINISTRY NOT REPRESENTED IN THE WORKING  
GROUP THAT MINISTER IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE.

2. THE GOH IS STILL WORKING ON ITS MINIMUM WAGE DECREE.  
FONSECA CITED CERTAIN STUDIES SHOWING THAT THE CURRENT  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 03572 182330Z

AVERAGE WAGE IN HONDURAS IS 1.85 LEMPIRAS (2 LEMPIRAS

EQUAL \$1 US) DAILY AND THAT TO PURCHASE SUFFICIENT FOOD CALORIES IN TEGUCIGALPA ONE NEEDS 4.8 LEMPIRAS DAILY. DURING EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFFS FONSECA HAD CONFIDENTLY DISCUSSED LEVELS AND LIKELY DATES OF THE IMPOSITION OF THE DECREE BUT UPON THIS INSTANCE HE DID NOT DISCUSS EITHER LEVELS OR TIME TABLES AND QUICKLY MOVED TO ANOTHER SUBJECT. ONE OF THE DATES EARLIER MENTIONED BY THE MINISTER AS LIKELY FOR THE ISSUANCE OF THE DECREE WAS SEPTEMBER 15, THE NATIONAL DAY OF HONDURAS, WHICH HAD PASSED JUST TWO DAYS EARLIER WITHOUT MENTION OF SUCH A DECREE.

COMMENT: MINISTER FONSECA HAS BEEN A CONSISTENT TARGET OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND RUMORS PREDICTING HIS IMMEDIATE FIRING BY THE CHIEF OF STATE HAVE BEEN FREQUENT. HOWEVER, HIS ROLE IN FORMING THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WORKING GRUP AND HIS CURRENT PARTICIPATION IN THAT GROUP LIKELY INDICATE THAT HIS POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE CHIEF OF STATE IS SECURE FOR THE TIME BEING. MINISTER FONSECA'S RELUCTANCE TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF THE MINIMUM WAGE DECREE IN DEPTH, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF HIS EARLIER CONFIDENCE ABOUT THIS MATTER, IS PROBABLY A GOOD INDICATION OF THE INTENSITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR OPPOSITION TO THIS MEASURE. IT MAY ALSO REFLECT THAT THIS PRESSURE IS BEGINNING TO BE FELT BY THE CHIEF OF STATE.

SANCHEZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MINIMUM WAGE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 SEP 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** collinp0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973TEGUCI03572  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS SANCHEZ  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** TEGUCIGALPA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19730926/aaaaaswt.tel  
**Line Count:** 87  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** collinp0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 23 JAN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <01 MAR 2002 by collinp0>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONVERSATION WITH MINLAB FONSECA DURING A CALL I MADE UPON HIM AT HIS OFFICE SEPTEMBER  
**TAGS:** PFOR, HO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005